

SECTION 17 -COLLECTION AND HANDLING OF LINEN

I. GENERAL

Although linen has not been linked to the acquisition of infection (with the rare exception of lice and scabies), it must be handled in such a manner that clean linen remains clean and soiled linen does not add to the microbial load in the environment.

II. SPECIFIC

A. Clean linen - Includes all linen which has been processed by the laundry using approved methods and has been through the transfer/receiving process in a manner to minimize contamination by the environment or personnel. Clean linen management:

1. Handle as little as possible.
2. Store in an enclosed room, cabinet, or cart.
3. Transport in clean, closed or covered linen containers.

B. Soiled linen includes all linen that has come in contact with patients, been dropped on the floor, or otherwise been contaminated. All soiled linen is managed the same regardless of the amount or type of soil. Soiled linen management:

1. Collect at point-of-use in hospital-approved impervious laundry bags placed in covered linen hampers.
2. Do not fill laundry bags more than 2/3 full.
3. Remove at least every 24 hours.

C. Take extreme care to insure that foreign objects, particularly sharps, are not placed in the laundry.